

## **Draft Statement of CBC and CDC on the Centers Framework for Collective Action**

**22 October 2004<sup>1</sup>  
CIMMYT, Mexico**

Significant and continuing efforts have been made in the past years to reform the three pillars of the CG system: the Consultative Group, its Executive Council and Partners, the Science Council, and the 15 Independent agricultural research Centers. As a continuation of that process, Center Directors and Board Chairs of the 15 Centers have decided that as well as proceeding with initiatives to increase the transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of individual Center Programmes, they will also enhance their capacity for collective action. During the meeting of ExCo 7, ExCo members were pleased to see the results of the work of the CDC held in Addis Ababa in July, 2004, and said that they would look for the early benefits.

The mechanism by which this will be done is through the creation of a formal Alliance to:

- Build on their extensive existing well performing collaboration in programs, administration and policies.
- Build on an analysis of deficiencies which have characterized collective action in the past with specific major Guiding Principles to address these past deficiencies
- Build on existing entities and mechanisms such as the Center Directors Committee, the Committee of Board Chairs, the Medium Term planning process and others.
- Build on a determination of the Centers to improve and streamline programming efforts in SubSaharan Africa, in collaboration with the System Task Forces, as a first priority.

At the level of Center management, the Alliance will therefore govern *the collective* work of the independent Centers, establish mechanisms for conflict resolution and speak with a common voice to raise the visibility of the issues the Centers address collectively. The Centers recognize the importance of involving others from the outset, such as regional and national partners, in framing collective actions in order to ensure that the action serves the people we are trying to reach.

The present Center Directors Committee will transform itself to become the Alliance Executive, based on major Guiding Principles designed to address past challenges and with greater decision making powers and accountability. This will extend the CDC's own operating and policy reforms of recent years and make it more proactive.

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<sup>1</sup> As amended by FHAO on 24 October by the addition of the comment on the ExCo7 discussion.

The Board Chairs warmly welcome these positive developments, and, will support this new and creative impetus by acting as a Board for the Alliance, with an initial focus on serving as a higher body on conflict resolution.

At the level of the system, the Executive Committee at its meeting in September 2004 welcomed both the foresight represented in organizing this work, and the important step forward that would be represented by its implementation.

In addition to the reforms agreed in governance of the Centers' collective work, the Centers also agreed on a set of immediate actions to be implemented in the spirit of the Alliance and in consultation with ASERECA and SADC/FANR and CORAF. These are:

- Sub Saharan Programmatic Alignment: two pilot sub-regional MTPs to be developed, one for east and central Africa and one for west and central Africa
- A pilot project on country coordination to be conducted in Kenya

Streamlined CGIAR decision making and integrated System support services, plus greater programmatic alignment create a requirement for Centers to act in greater concert. These decisions are based on the growing strength and benefits of existing collaborations and the benefits to the CGIAR and its partners of greater future collective action. The Alliance and associated changes to the way the Centers do business together will benefit the Centers' partners and the whole CGIAR System through targeting collective Center resources more strategically and efficiently to meet partner needs, as well as to identify and seize emerging opportunities, with an initial focus on how to assist the poor farmers of Africa.